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### Effects of Poverty on Household's Welfare in Maiduguri, Nigeria

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#### Abstract

The study adopted the survey research design method to examine the effects of poverty on household's welfare in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria. The study used self-developed questionnaire to collect data from four hundred (400) respondents. The study descriptive statistics (for data analysis). The results were presented in tables and discussed according to the research objective. The study revealed that lack of purchasing power, low life expectancy, poor housing, high level of hunger and starvation were the

effects of poverty on households' welfare in Maiduguri Metropolis. The study recommended that increase in household size increases the incidence of poverty, hence efforts should be made towards family planning for effective population control and also policies should be made towards increase in employment opportunities in order to reduce dependency ratio among households, thereby alleviating poverty.

**Keywords:** Poverty, Households, Welfare, Descriptive Statistics

#### 1. Introduction

One of the most frequent and common social problems in the world today in both developed and developing countries is poverty. Poverty is a pronounced deprivation in well-being (World Bank, 2010), similarly, Houghton & Khander (2009) refer well-being to be primarily having command over commodities, those people who do not have adequate income or consumption above some minimum threshold are considered poor. This view associates poverty majorly to monetary terms. Secondly, well-being focuses on the ability of an individual to function properly in the society or it is the ability of an individual to obtain certain type of consumption and services like education, health care, political freedom and so on.

In northern Nigeria the poverty rates by zones have historically been high and increasing; whereas in the southern zones poverty fell significantly. The divergence in the welfare levels, trends and living conditions between the two regions could undermine social cohesion. Although, Borno State Government created a Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Youth Empowerment which was charged with the responsibility of tackling the menace of poverty among the people of the State by empowering the youth and poor through the provision of poverty alleviation materials and micro credit loans which expected to improve their socio-economic status (BOSEEDS, 2005) <sup>[6]</sup> recently, due to displacement caused by insurgency, over 2.5 million people were displaced, resulting in loss of employment, properties and means of livelihoods. In response to these economic destructions, the Borno State Government established the Ministry of Reconstruction, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (RRR) to assist in the quick recovery of the livelihoods or welfare means of the affected people (Balami *et al.*, 2018) <sup>[4]</sup>. Despite all this, poverty in Borno in general and Maiduguri Metropolitan Area in particular seems to persist.

These days, Maiduguri streets are filled with men, women and even children fronting for their parents on the street begging for money and even food items due to poverty effects resulted from insurgency. Many families cannot afford three square meals in a day, children are withdrawn from schools for lack of fees, families resort to herbal medicine for treatment each time a member of the household falls sick rather than hospital for proper checkup and there is massive unemployment rate among households from peasant to university graduates which makes poverty effects more extreme among households in Maiduguri. It was on this ground that this study determined the effects of poverty on households' welfare in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria.

#### 2. Literature Review

##### 2.1 Conceptual Issues

This section discussed the various concepts related to the subject matter under investigation. It is an abstraction from related study carried out by other researchers in the field.

## 2.2 Poverty

The meaning of poverty is one of the issues that has beget different opinions, disputes and intense debate among experts and researchers in development Economics and such debate tends to be overshadowed by researchers' socio-cultural, ethical, political, or ideological orientation, and norms and conventions of his/her community, institution, or organization (Iyenda, 2007).

A precise and unanimously accepted definition of poverty is elusive principally because it affects several aspects of the human sphere, such as physical, moral and psychological conditions (Ajakaiye & Adeyeye, 2002) <sup>[1]</sup>. The notion of poverty is connected to different number of indicators depending on perception by region, society or communities and it can take various forms depending on the issues being addressed.

One of the broadest contemporary views of poverty is that of the European Commission, which claims that "people are said to be living in poverty if their income and resources are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living considered acceptable in the society in which they live. Because of their poverty they may experience multiple disadvantages through unemployment, low income, poor housing, inadequate health care and barriers to lifelong learning, culture, sport and recreation." (European Commission, 2004).

Fundamentally, poverty refers to lacking enough resources to provide the necessities of life-food, clean water, shelter and clothing. However, nowadays that can be broadened to include access to health care, education and even transportation. In government circles, poverty is often further defined as "absolute poverty" and "relative poverty" (Omotola, 2008) <sup>[14]</sup>. There are many types of poverty as the definition of poverty further entails absolute poverty as defined by Balami and John (1999) <sup>[3]</sup> which refers to lack of the minimum physical requirements of a person or a household for existence, so extreme that those affected are no longer in a position to live "a life worthy of human dignity". Relative poverty refers to a person or household whose provision with goods is lower than that of other persons or households (Balami & John, 1999) <sup>[3]</sup>. Furthermore, Balami & John (1999) <sup>[3]</sup> quoted conjectural poverty as a temporary phenomenon which normally self-sufficient individuals go through in crises while structural poverty is long term and normally caused by individual circumstance. Poverty is also categorized as either chronic or transitory. A chronically poor household is poor throughout but if it is only for some time, then it is transitory poverty.

Poverty is a condition of having insufficient resources or income and can also be defined as the state of one who lacks a certain amount of material possessions or money (Encarta, 2009). Poverty is a state of insufficiency or inadequate resources of either financial or physical materials needed. "Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is lack of money to attend to one's health problem. UNDP (2000) <sup>[19]</sup> gives a comprehensive summary of the basic definitions of poverty. They are divided into two major categories, income and human poverty. Income poverty is further divided into extreme poverty and overall poverty. It is defined as the lack of income necessary to satisfy basic food needs usually defined on the basis of minimum calorie requirements. Overall poverty is the lack of income necessary to satisfy essential non-food needs such as shelter,

clothing, and energy. On the other hand, human poverty is the lack of basic human capabilities, illiteracy, malnutrition abbreviated life span, poor material health, and illness from preventable diseases.

Poverty is the lack of the means to satisfy basic material and social needs, as well as a feeling of powerlessness. Poverty is non-uniform, complex, multi-dimensional, cyclic and seasonal (Mabangi 2000, as cited in Busisa, 2011) <sup>[7]</sup>. This means poverty can be classified based on different needs and it is multidimensional. Talba *et al.*, (2010) <sup>[16]</sup> viewed poverty as the condition of lacking basic human needs such as nutrition, clean water, health care, clothing and shelter because of the inability to afford them.

Poverty entails more than the lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods. Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion, as well as the lack of participation in decision-making (UN, 2019) <sup>[20]</sup>. Poverty is multidimensional, it is conceptualized in different views by different societies and scholars, and it also involves deprivations in several aspects of life including economic, social, cultural, political and environmental dimensions. *Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor, Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read, poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time.*" (Babatunde, 2018).

The World Bank's (2020) poverty definition says, "A person is considered poor if his or her income level falls below some minimum level necessary to meet basic needs." It sets this minimum level, or international poverty line, as living on less than \$1.90 a day.

Talba and Munakur (2019) <sup>[17]</sup> define poverty as a state or condition in which a person or community lacks the financial resources and essentials to enjoy a minimum standard of life and well-being that is considered acceptable in society.

## 2.3 Household welfare

Defining household welfare is challenging because it requires looking at many aspects of people's lives, most experts and ordinary people around the world would agree that it requires meeting various human needs, some of which are essential e.g., being in good health, as well as the ability to pursue one's goals, to thrive and feel satisfied with one's life. Many scholars aiming to define 'welfare' on the basis of first principles have suggested that ultimately, the term aims to capture a concern with the well-being of people. At its most basic level, the word welfare merely means well-being.

House hold welfare refers to a range of government programs that provides financial or other aid to households or groups who cannot support themselves. ILO (1996 as cited in Olsen, 2007) defines welfare as covering support for those in old age, support for the maintenance of children, medical treatment, parental and sick leave, unemployment and disability benefits, and support for sufferers of occupational injury. Welfare may also encompass efforts to provide a basic level of well-being through free or subsidized social services such as healthcare, education, vocational training and public housing. In a welfare state, the state assumes responsibility for the health, education, and welfare of society, providing a range of social services such as those described.

In UK at least, it is common for scholars to draw the boundaries of the welfare state around services dealing with the five giant social evils identified by Beveridge: what we would describe in modern-day language as social security/income protection, health care, education, employment and housing (Hudson *et al.*, 2008), perhaps with the addition of social care too (Hill & Irving, 2009). Others, however, would draw the boundaries of the welfare state much more broadly, including areas such as transport policy, the environment, food policy and access to the internet (Bochel, 2009) <sup>[5]</sup>.

The narrow definition of the welfare state brings definitional problems because the range of services that might fall under a deceptively simple heading such as 'health care' or 'education' is vast: should, for instance, an effective health service include access to gyms, cosmetic surgery or healthy-eating classes (Hudson *et al.*, 2008).

A fundamental distinction can be drawn between measures of 'objective' and 'subjective' welfare, the former being based on material or social circumstances that can be externally verified (e.g., the level of a household's income) whereas the latter is based on self-assessment (e.g., an individual's personal assessment of how satisfied they are with their life). Most commentators agree that strong measures of welfare encompass both, and the OECD's Better Life Index (OECD, 2011: 25) includes data on the following components:

1. Income and wealth (e.g., household income)
2. Jobs and earnings (e.g., the employment rate)
3. Quality of housing (e.g., number of rooms per person)
4. Health status (e.g., life expectancy)
5. Work and life (e.g., time devoted to leisure)
6. Education and skills (e.g., educational attainment)
7. Social connections (e.g., the extent of social networks)
8. Civic engagement and governance (e.g., voter turn-out)
9. Environmental quality (e.g., air quality)
10. Personal security (e.g., murder rate)
11. Subjective well-being (e.g., life satisfaction).

McCallum and Price (2016) <sup>[13]</sup> propose an even more encompassing definition of welfare outlining it as diverse and fluid, respecting the beliefs and values of individual, family, and community; and experiences, culture, opportunities, and contexts across time and change. They aver that it encompasses interwoven environmental, collective, and individual elements that interact across a lifespan (McCallum & Price, 2016) <sup>[13]</sup>. Despite a range of notions encompassed in welfare definitions, welfare can then be described in very broad terms as a holistic, balanced life experience where welfare needs to be considered in relation to how an individual feels and functions across several areas, including cognitive, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual wellbeing.

### 3. Theoretical Review

This section presents the theories adopted for the study.

#### 3.1 The Theory of Cultural Belief Systems that Support Sub-Cultures of Poverty

The way of life of poverty is an idea in friendly hypothesis that expresses that the upsides of individuals encountering poverty assume a significant part in propagating their devastated condition, supporting a pattern of poverty across ages. This hypothesis is based on her conviction that poverty is made or brought about by the transmission over ages of a

bunch of convictions, qualities, and abilities that are socially produced yet exclusively held (Bradshaw, 2006). He further states that people are at fault since they are survivors of their deficient subculture or culture. It ought to be noticed that this hypothesis has its root in the "Way of life of Poverty". The ideas of culture of poverty and social disconnection or avoidance give systems that clarify how poverty is made and kept up in certain areas or among families. The social and natural variables identify with the impact of individuals' private climate that will in general shape poverty or achievement. According to Sameti *et al.*, (2012), poverty is communicated from one age to another on the grounds that kids are associated with qualities and objectives related with neediness. According to Bradshaw (2006), the way of life of poverty is a subculture of needy individuals in ghettos, helpless districts, or social settings where they foster a common arrangement of convictions, qualities and standards for conduct that are discrete yet implanted in the way of life of the primary society.

### 4. Methodology

This study adopted the survey method. The choice for the survey method is as a result of the fact that it focuses on getting subjective opinion of respondents and aims at drawing an accurate assessment of the entire population by studying sample derived from the population (Osuala, 2005). Data sources employed include the internet, journals, articles, textbooks, and primary data.

The population of this study comprised all the households in Maiduguri Metropolis. The study area was stratified according to high, medium and low residential areas as geographical locations (Maina *et al.*, 2012). These represent the three income groups of the households. The area is purposively selected, MMC comprises fifteen (15) wards in which 6 wards were randomly selected after grouping the 15 wards into income groups. Purposive sampling technique was adopted in selecting respondents as there is likelihood of mix up of income groups in the wards areas. The total number of households in Maiduguri Metropolis is 210,708. A total of four hundred (400) households were interviewed in the six wards (Shehuri north, Gwange 1, Lamisula, Gamboru, Maisandari and Bolori 1) selected for the study. In calculating the sample size for the study, the researcher applied the formula propounded by Taro Yamane (1973) with 95% confidence level on the study population. The calculation formula of Taro Yamane is presented as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where,

n= Sample size required

N = Total population of households in Maiduguri Metropolis (210,708)

e = Margin of error (0.05%)

Substituting the numbers into the formula:

Maiduguri Metropolis, Households population was estimated by Borno State Primary Health Care, 2023 to be 210,708.

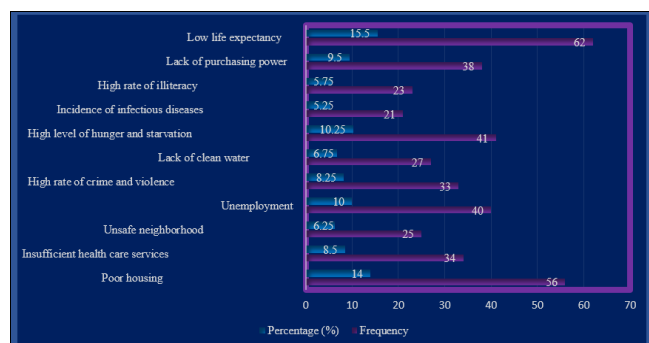
$$n = \frac{210,708}{1+210,708(0.05)^2}$$

$n = 399.24209 \approx 400$

Data collated were analyzed using descriptive statistics with the aid of Stata version 9 software.

## 5. Results and Discussion

### 5.1 Effects of Poverty on Households Welfare in Maiduguri Metropolis



**Fig 1:** Effects of Poverty on Households Welfare in Maiduguri Metropolis

Fig 1 shows lack of purchasing power, low life expectancy, poor housing, high level of hunger and starvation were the effects of poverty on households' welfare in Maiduguri Metropolis. This agrees with the findings of Talba *et al.*, (2010) [16] and Ayoade & Adeola (2012) which revealed that lack of purchasing power, low life expectancy, poor housing and high level of hunger and starvation are the effects of poverty on household. Opposing these findings are findings of Iheonu and Urama (2019) which revealed that low literacy rate, poor skills set, income inequality and corruption are the effects of poverty on household. Unemployment, insufficient health care services, high rate of illiteracy, unsafe neighborhood and incidence of infectious diseases were the effects of poverty on households in the study area. This is in conformity with the findings of Evans *et al.*, (2019) which revealed that high rate of crime and violence, unsafe neighborhoods and unemployment are the effects of poverty on household. Also, this finding is in conformity with the findings of Guiga and Rejeb (2012) which revealed that school enrollment reduces poverty because high rate of illiteracy is an effect of poverty on household.

### 5.2 Conclusions

Based on the results from this study, it was concluded that lack of purchasing power, low life expectancy, poor housing, high level of hunger and starvation were the effects of poverty on households' welfare in Maiduguri Metropolis.

### 5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendation was made:

1. Efforts should be made towards the safety of lives and property to reduce violence and to make the neighborhoods safer for habitants for more economic activities. Hence, in order to reduce the effect of poverty households should be provided with incentives and employment opportunities to reduce the impacts of the effects.

## 6. Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

## 7. Author Contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Danjuma Abegye Nuhu designed the study, Yakaka Bukar Maina managed the literature searches. Musa Talba Jibrin performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and the first draft of the manuscript and managed the analyses of the study. 'All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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